

The Annual Report (1906)  
of the  
Medical Officer of Health  
for the  
Urban District of Shanklin.

Gentlemen,

During the past year there have been registered within your district, Eighty (80) births, consisting of Thirty four (34) Males and Forty six (46) females.

Four (4) of these children were illegitimate, that is at the rate of Fifty (50) per 1000 births.

The birth rate for the year is Sixteen (16) per 1000 of population as against 13.5 per 1000 for last year. The birth rate of the country as a whole being 27 per 1000.

There have occurred within the district during the past year Fifty six (56) deaths, viz. Twenty eight (28) Male and Twenty eight (28) females. But of the Fifty six people who have died within the district during the year seven (7) of these are visitors which must be excluded in estimating the normal death rate of the inhabitants generally as visitors are not taken into account in estimating the population. The death rate is therefore 9.6 per 1000 of population which is 0.4 per 1000 higher than last year; but I pointed out last year that the death rate was the lowest recorded during my tenure of



office. In previous years I have estimated the average number of visitors present and added that number to the normal population and included all deaths whether visitors or otherwise in making my estimates. It has however been pointed out to me by the County Council that this is an unusual method, I have therefore adopted the method which they particularise as being generally used by the Medical Officers of the Isle of Wight. That is to say in a district in which the population is increasing, as it is in this, to the last census is added the yearly average increase of the preceding decennium. The death rate within the district being 9.6 per 1000, is therefore 5.8 per 1000 below the death rate of the country generally which is 15.6 per 1000.

From the point of view of age the deaths occurred as follows:-

Under 1 year there were 5 deaths			
Over 1 year and	" 5 years	2	"
Over 5 years	" 15 years	2	"
Over 15 years	" 25 years	0	"
Over 25 years	" 65 "	22	"
Over 65 years		25	"
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		56	Total.
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It will be seen that 25 of the deaths were those of people over 65 years of age, this is exactly the same number as last year, at the





other extreme however we have 5 deaths in infants under 1 year whereas last year we had but 2.

As to causation the death certificates were returned as follows: -

9	deaths	were	due	to	Cancer.
5	"	"	"	"	Heart disease.
4	"	"	"	"	Pneumonia.
4	"	"	"	"	Senile Decay.
4	"	"	"	"	Cerebral haemorrhage (apoplexy).
4	"	"	"	"	Phthisis.
3	"	"	"	"	Tuberculosis.
2	"	"	"	"	Gangrene.
2	"	"	"	"	Rheumatic fever.
2	"	"	"	"	Diabetes.
2	"	"	"	"	Angina Pectoris.
2	"	"	"	"	Brights Disease.
2	"	"	"	"	Bronchitis.
2	"	"	"	"	Diseases of the nervous system.
2	"	"	"	"	Premature Birth.
1	death	was	due	to	Enteritis.
1	"	"	"	"	Infantile convulsions.
1	"	"	"	"	Hydatid Cyst.
1	"	"	"	"	Intestinal Obstruction.
1	"	"	"	"	Marasmus.



I death was due to	Meningitis (septic).
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I       "       "       "	Accident.
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56   Total.  
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As to the causation of death during the year 1906 we notice the absence of "Influenza" from the list. Further we may note that not one death is notified as being due to any infectious disease whether notifiable or not. The figure that strikes one as exceptional is the 9 deaths attributable to cancer, which is at the rate of 16.3 per 100 deaths, the highest per centage I have had to record. In 1906 there were 8 deaths from this disease. In looking over the records of the last fourteen years I find that the average number of deaths from cancer is 9.64 per hundred; but that during the first seven years of this period the average was 7.93 per 100 whereas during the second seven years of the series of fourteen the average was 11.36 per 100, which is a difference of 3.43 per 100. I am aware that the numbers here dealt with are small, possibly too small from which to draw any general conclusion. One must also of course bear in mind in this connection that this is a district in which very many people in advancing years come to reside and cancer is a disease of advancing years. The low birth rate viz. 16 per 1000 also points to a population composed much more largely of people of advanced years than the population of the country generally.





### Notification of Infectious Diseases.

During the past year there were notified to me 6 cases of Scarlet fever and one case of Diphtheria.

The cases of scarlet fever occurred one each in the months of May, August and October, while three were notified in November in which latter month the case of Diphtheria also occurred.

From the middle of October there were cases of Influenza and by December it might be said to have reached epidemic form.

There was also a widespread epidemic of Mumps in November and December, so much so that the Infant Parochial school had to be closed for three weeks.

Again let me allude to the value of the Isolation Hospital in checking or rather more correctly speaking in preventing an epidemic of scarlet fever in your district.

From the information obtained the cases of scarlet fever appear to have been of a mild type.

### Drainage.

While your main sewers are good, modern and thoroughly satisfactory, I must again point out as I have done before that there are certain subsidiary sewers which are very old and which will need your serious attention in the near future and at least one such needs your attention now. I allude to the sewer in Cliff Park



Road - I have had a serious complaint from a resident on the cliff of the constant annoyance they are subjected to by the frequent blocking of that sewer. Roots have already found their way into that sewer and such being the case it is only a question of time before it will become blocked again. The fact is that particular sewer ought to be renewed without any further delay as I have before pointed out in a previous report.

With regard to house drains and sanitary fittings very good work has been done during the past year in getting a large number of houses into a reliable sanitary condition. There have been granted during the year Twenty nine sanitary certificates which is an increase on the preceding year. But apart from this which only represents a small number of the houses examined, over forty sanitary defects have been rectified.

It having come to my notice that several children attending the school in the Palmerston Hall were suffering from throat affections I therefore examined the building along with the Sanitary Inspector and it soon became evident that serious sanitary defects were present both as to drainage and ventilation. The drainage has been remodelled the old drains done away with and the ventilation has been attended to so that the building is now in a sound sanitary condition.

The Parochial Schools which have given much trouble in the past are now I am glad to say in a thoroughly satisfactory condition. The





new drainage system and latrines are now working satisfactorily and the ventilation of the schools is ample.

### Scavenging.

This has been effectively carried out during the last year and only a few trivial complaints on this ground have reached me and none of which were of a nature to endanger the public health.

### Water Supply.

It is to be regretted that this important question is still unsettled. The past year has added its quota of evidence as to the vital importance of this matter. It will be a source of great satisfaction to everyone interested in the public health of your district when the present negotiations have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. I as Medical Officer of Health can only say that it will afford me the greatest gratification to learn that your prolonged negotiations have ended successfully and that you have thereby settled a question which has always been a source of anxiety to me and to my predecessor before me. That your present supply is second to none in quality and that so far in the past you have managed to tide over without disaster is a fact, but you are well aware that a health resort like yours cannot go serenely on in the future with the narrow margin of safety of the past.



Cowsheds Dairies and Milkshops.

The cowsheds are better kept than they used to be and the lapses in linewashing etc. no longer occur. They are fairly well kept and sufficiently well ventilated. The dairies and milkshops are upon the whole kept scrupulously clean and are well looked after both as to cleanliness and ventilation. There arises however a question in relation to our milk supply which in my opinion is certainly not satisfactory and that is the question of the conveyance of tubercle by means of milk. This question was beginning to receive the serious attention of public bodies that its importance demanded when a denial was thrown upon the supposition that Human and Bovine tuberculosis were identical and that children did not therefore get tuberculosis disease by means of milk from tuberculous cows. It is not for me to express my opinion upon the identity of Human and Bovine tuberculosis, but now that the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis has issued a report from which it is abundantly clear that milk is a source of tuberculosis infection the important question arises is a district such as yours sufficiently safe guarded against such a danger. I am of opinion that it certainly is not. It appears to me that a proper professional inspection of every cowshed should be carried out at certain intervals duly fixed upon with the object of ascertaining whether any of the milk cows were suffering from tubercle and especially from tubercle affecting the udder or mammary gland, the latter is of the utmost importance. Here in a health



The Commission has not yet received the report of the Committee on the subject of the investigation of the cause of the epidemic of influenza in the United States. The Committee has been instructed to report on the cause of the epidemic, and on the measures which should be taken to prevent its recurrence. The Commission has been informed that the Committee has been unable to determine the cause of the epidemic, and that it is of the opinion that the epidemic was caused by a virus which was introduced into the United States from abroad. The Commission has been informed that the Committee has also been unable to determine the measures which should be taken to prevent the recurrence of the epidemic, and that it is of the opinion that the only effective measure is the isolation of the infected persons. The Commission has been informed that the Committee has also been unable to determine the measures which should be taken to prevent the recurrence of the epidemic, and that it is of the opinion that the only effective measure is the isolation of the infected persons.



resort like this a large number of delicate children are brought for their health and it ought to be made as certain as possible that they do not receive milk from tuberculous cows. It may be true that many people sterilize their milk, but it is certainly true that very many do not, I will not attempt to go into per centages - there is not the data for that - but half the children and probably more drink milk that is not sterilized. Even granting that all milk could be sterilized the risk of tuberculous infection ought certainly not to be left to efficient sterilization, but ought to be eliminated as far as possible at the source. I do not wish to imply that your district is in worse condition than other similar districts but I do think that it is a subject demanding most serious and energetic attention.

#### Slaughter Houses.

The Slaughter houses are now better placed and much less objectionable than they used to be, but as I have before pointed out the proper course to adopt is to have a public abbatoir where all the slaughtering could be carried out, it could then be under efficient supervision and could be so much more easily and economically carried on.

#### Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplace & Homework.

This is not a district of manufacturies but a health resort and the factories, thirteen in number, are insignificant only employing





two or three or four hands - they are well kept and the employees are under good hygienic surroundings. Very much the same applies to the Workshops and Workplaces, which consist chiefly of carpenter shops, there is no work or manufactory carried on in the district which is in any way detrimental to health. The workshops are well ventilated and kept in a cleanly condition, in each case where any defect was found the defect was remedied on it being pointed out that such existed. There is still on the list an underground bakehouse, it is really only very partially an underground bakehouse and is kept in good condition and is a very small one.

#### Meteorology.

The past year was one to be remembered by the beautiful dry summer, there was very little rain in March and April, while June July and August were exceedingly bright and dry. It must however not be lost sight of that though the summer was fine the annual rainfall was rather above the average for we had over 12 inches of rain in January and February alone and we again had over  $10\frac{1}{2}$  inches during October and November so that the year totalled up a rainfall of 35 inches. It is just as well to recall the fact that November 1905 shewed a rainfall of just under 6 inches and taking that along with the 12 inches of January and February 1906, it is futile to talk of the various springs having been severely tested by the droughts of last summer. As a matter of fact the springs were filled up to overflowing in the winter and again the following Autumn - I mention

and is kept in good condition and is a very good one.

The first part of the report is devoted to a description of the work done during the year. It is divided into two main parts, the first of which deals with the work done in the field, and the second with the work done in the laboratory. The first part is divided into three sections, the first of which deals with the work done in the field, the second with the work done in the laboratory, and the third with the work done in the field. The second part is divided into two sections, the first of which deals with the work done in the laboratory, and the second with the work done in the field.



these facts because I know that very unwarrantable conclusions are liable to be drawn from the fact that we have two dry periods during the year viz. March and April and again in July and August. I must congratulate you on having established a system of accurate meteorological observation and I am glad to see that Shanklin appears in the list in the Daily Telegraph of places over the kingdom in which the hours of sunshine for the year is tabulated and not only does it appear in the list but heads the list with a total of 2217 hours of sunshine for the year, surpassing the second sunniest place given by 183 hours which means a month with 6 hours a day of sunshine beyond the next sunniest place given which is Torquay. When I proposed to you originally that meteorological records should be kept I ventured to suggest that some such result would be obtained and I am glad to find that my expectations have been more than verified.

I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

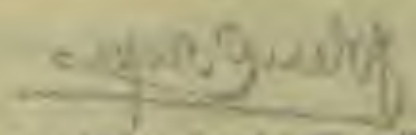
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John Cowper', with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

The Medical Officer of Health.

These facts being I think that very considerable assistance is  
likely to be given from the fact that we have not any periods of  
the year viz. March and April and again in July and August. I want  
to emphasize you on having established a series of accurate records  
factual observation and I am glad to see that Franklin appears to  
find in the daily telegraph of places over the kingdom in which the  
ground is suitable for the year is indicated and not only does it  
appear in the list but probably that with a total of 247 hours of  
sunshine for the year, but during the second summer place given  
the same which would be about a half of sunshine before  
the next summer place, the year is 1894. When I proposed to  
the officials that astronomical records should be kept I remarked  
that the only one would be of interest and I am glad to  
find that the expectations have been more than fulfilled.

I am, Sir,

Very obediently,  
Your obedient servant,



The Medical Officer of Health.